

ANNUAL  
REPORT

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1991

# Nature Conservancy

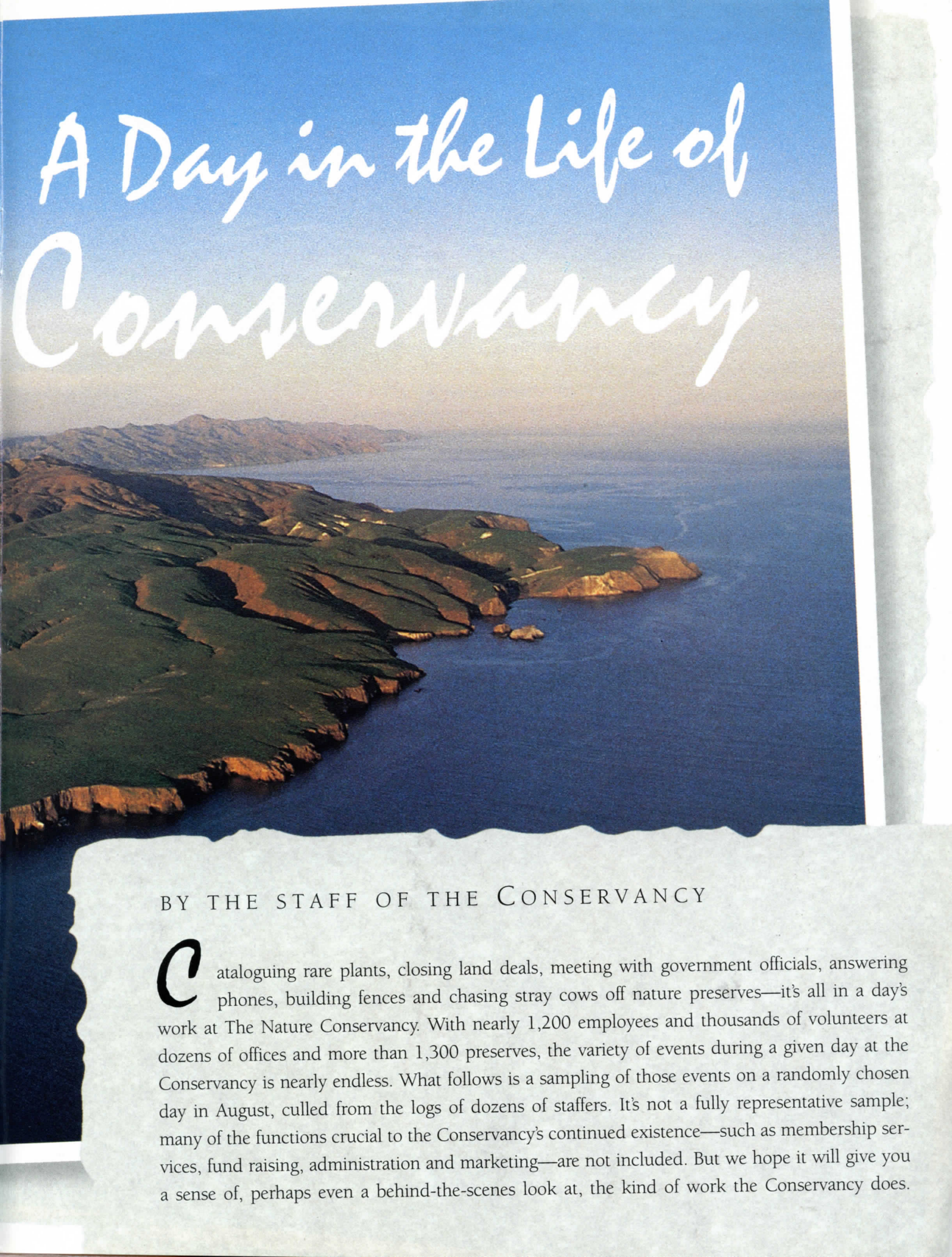
40TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

MOVING  
INTO THE  
FUTURE



# The Nature C





# A Day in the Life of Conservancy

BY THE STAFF OF THE CONSERVANCY

**C**ataloguing rare plants, closing land deals, meeting with government officials, answering phones, building fences and chasing stray cows off nature preserves—it's all in a day's work at The Nature Conservancy. With nearly 1,200 employees and thousands of volunteers at dozens of offices and more than 1,300 preserves, the variety of events during a given day at the Conservancy is nearly endless. What follows is a sampling of those events on a randomly chosen day in August, culled from the logs of dozens of staffers. It's not a fully representative sample; many of the functions crucial to the Conservancy's continued existence—such as membership services, fund raising, administration and marketing—are not included. But we hope it will give you a sense of, perhaps even a behind-the-scenes look at, the kind of work the Conservancy does.



*5:45 a.m. Maui, Hawaii.* A crew of land stewards camped in the Conservancy's Waikamoi Preserve—a rugged, spectacular refuge hugging the northern slopes of Haleakala volcano—is awakened by a chorus of forest birds. The crew will spend the day building protective fencing to keep out wild pigs and goats, which browse on and trample the vegetation in the United States' only tropical rain forest. When the Conservancy began working at the preserve in 1984, these non-native pigs and goats were destroying habitat crucial to the survival of many of Hawaii's endangered forest birds and other unique species. Since then, the Conservancy has dramatically reduced the damage caused by alien species. As a result, Waikamoi's endangered forest birds, such as the crested honeycreeper, have a better chance of surviving into the next century.



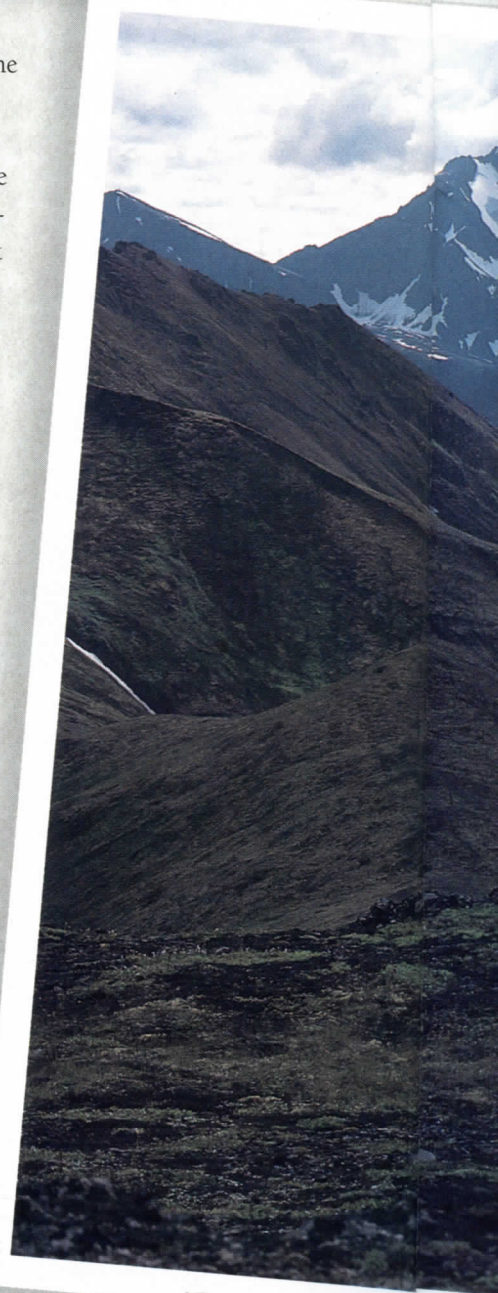
© RICK WARNER

*7 a.m. Panama City, Panama.* The Nature Conservancy's Randy Curtis holds the first of a day-long series of meetings with Panamanian officials regarding the country's recently announced debt-for-nature swap. The \$50-million swap will protect the watershed of the Panama canal, which includes the Chagres and Soberania rain forest national parks. Curtis is in Panama to review the progress of the deal and determine the next steps in the process.



© SUSAN BOURNIQUE/STAFF

Pages 22-23: One of the "crown jewels" of the Conservancy's preserve system, California's Santa Cruz Island. This page: Top, crested honeycreepers at Waikamoi Preserve in Hawaii; right, Alaska's Chugach State Park; left, the Conservancy's Randy Curtis (left) and Panamanian conservationist Juan Carlos Navarro.



© BILL EVANS/ALASKA STATE PARKS





*8:30 a.m. Anchorage, Alaska.* Steve Planchon and Kathy Hess from the Alaska office meet with the owners of four homesteads (totalling 560 acres) along the South Fork of Eagle River. Their land, which is still primarily wilderness, borders 500,000-acre Chugach State Park—home of brown and black bears, wolves, moose and bald eagles. The homesteaders, who settled in the area after World War II and are now retired, are seeking the Conservancy's help in keeping their property in its natural state.

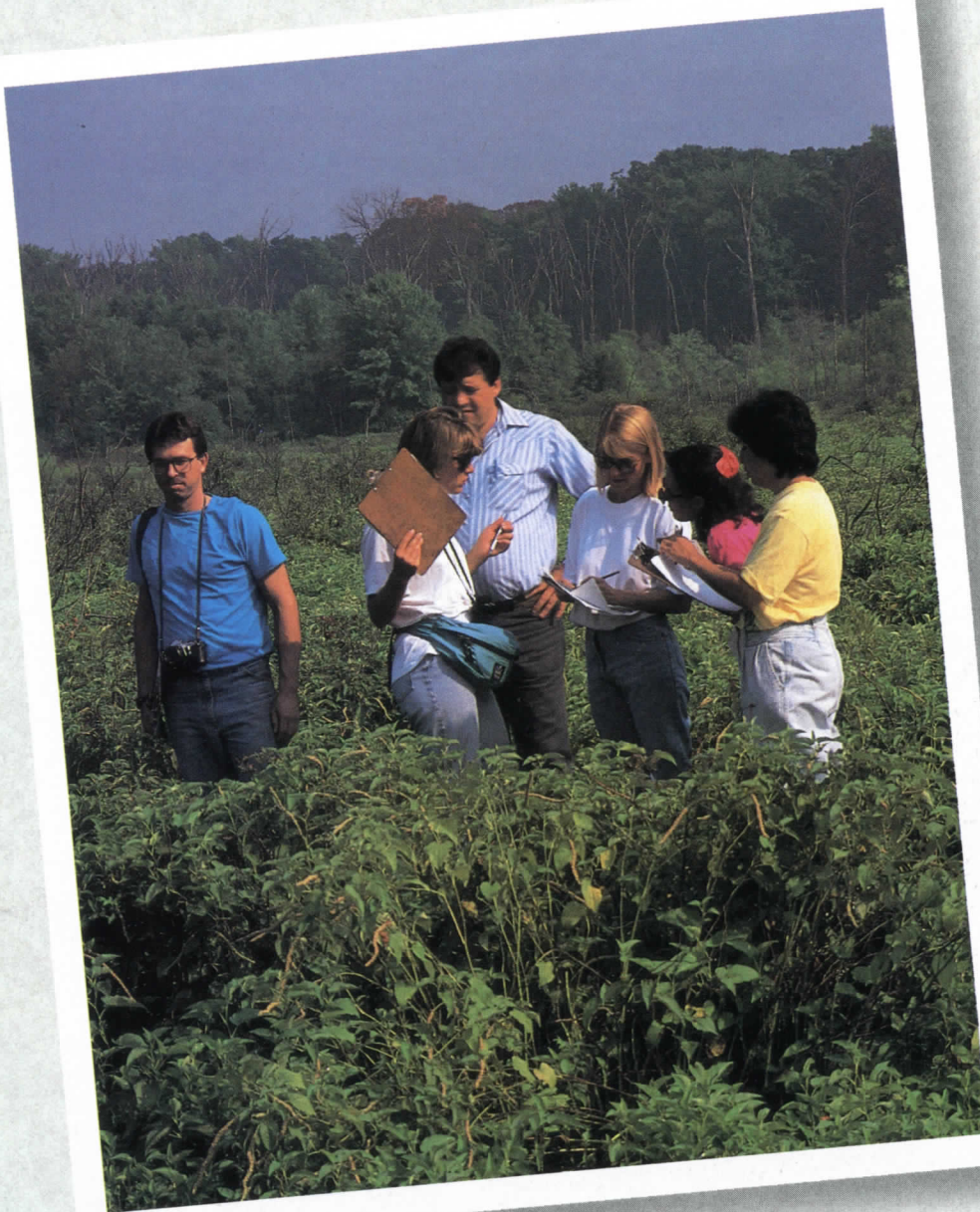
*9 a.m. Boston, Massachusetts.* In the Conservancy's eastern regional office, attorney Joyce Kittredge finishes her bagel and coffee and picks up the phone to work out the final details of a land purchase in Maryland. Kittredge has been working for almost two years on acquiring a 162-acre tract in a western Maryland area known as "The Glades." This property is part of the largest rainwater-fed mountain peat bog in the non-glaciated United States.





The seller's real estate agent tells Kittredge that they are now ready to close the deal. Kittredge sets about determining a closing date and gathering the final documents for review.

*Arlington, Virginia.* Several Latin American scientists spend the day at Conservancy headquarters learning about the organization's data collection and administration methods. The training sessions, conducted in Spanish by members of the Conservancy's Latin America Science Program, include a field practicum at nearby Huntley Meadows Park.



Latin American scientists and Conservancy staffers (left) at a field training session near Arlington, Virginia. The pyramid pigtoe mussel (right), a rare species found in the Clinch River near Cleveland, Virginia.

© DOUG BAKER/STAFF



**9 a.m. Chicago, Illinois.** Ralph Burnett from the Illinois office talks with lawyers about how to acquire 12 acres of tax-delinquent lots in the Chicago suburb of Markham. The lots are located within the 250-acre Indian Boundary Prairies, virgin grassland that represents the best black-soil prairie remaining in Illinois. "These lots have never been developed, even though they were subdivided for homes in the thirties," says Burnett. "If we can acquire them, they would be a valuable addition to the prairie."



**9 a.m. Sioux Falls, South**

**Dakota.** The Conservancy's Joe Satrom visits with a landowner interested in selling a 2,000-acre prairie/wetland complex in eastern South Dakota. This area contains six rare plant species, including the waxy bogstar and Riddell's goldenrod, found in several fens intertwined with beautiful rolling native prairie. "It's to the landowner's credit that this area has remained in its natural state," says Satrom.

**10 a.m. Cleveland, Virginia.** A major concentration of rare mussels lives in the Clinch River just 100 feet downstream from the outflow pipe of this small Appalachian town's sewage treatment plant. The Conservancy's Steve Hobbs, along with several state and local officials, are visiting the plant this morning. The town uses chlorine to treat its sewage and, without financial assistance to upgrade their plant, would be forced to seek a waiver from the state ban on discharging chlorine into the river. While the plant has a mechanism to remove chlorine from the outflow, there is always the possibility of failure—a failure that could prove fatal to the chlorine-sensitive mussels. Hobbs discusses the possibility of the Conservancy helping Cleveland purchase an ultraviolet sewage-treatment mechanism to replace their current system.

**10 a.m. Sussex County, New Jersey.** Jeff Powers of the New Jersey office talks with the owner of 168 acres at Springdale Swamp. This wetland area provides a haven for rare butterflies such as the northern metalmark and dion skipper, as well the long-tailed salamander, a threatened species in the state. The landowner, a 76-year-old retired man who immigrated from Italy 60 years ago and subsequently prospered, is considering donating a conservation easement to the Conservancy. He tells Powers how upset he is at the indiscriminate development in his area. "You can't grow more land," he says sadly. "People should leave the land in better shape than when they bought it."

**10 a.m. Columbia, South Carolina.** Linda Lundquist makes an important announcement at the



Conservancy's South Carolina field office. After 12 months of negotiations, the Conservancy has finally succeeded in obtaining an option to purchase the Grove plantation. This is a 2,000-acre property in the Ashepoo, Combahee and Edisto rivers (ACE) basin containing forests and marshes crucial to migratory waterfowl.

**10 a.m. Fairplay, Colorado.** At High Creek Fen, a Conservancy preserve, a diesel fuel tank is removed under supervision of Conservancy staff. The fuel tank was formerly used to fill bulldozers that stripped peat from the area. The 900-acre wetland, which harbors a relic subarctic plant community containing several rare species, is now protected from peat mining and other forms of development.

**10:30 a.m. Cape May, New Jersey.** Liz Johnson, Shyama Khanna and Karen Cotter begin a day of construction work at the Conservancy's Cape May Migratory Bird Refuge. Tens of thousands of visitors come to the preserve each year to enjoy one of the premiere migratory bird stopovers in North America and see the endangered piping plovers and least terns that nest there. On this hazy, hot and humid day, the three women are building dune crossovers—wooden structures placed strategically along the trails to minimize erosion. (The owner of the lumber yard where the crossover supplies were purchased turned out to be a loyal Nature Conservancy member. When he was told what the lumber was being used for, he knocked 20 percent off the price and cut the wood for free. "Keep up the good work," he said.)

### **Niobrara Valley Preserve, Nebraska.**

The Conservancy's Doug Kuhre monitors several cattle grazing areas to check forage and water conditions. Native grasslands in the Great Plains developed under the combined influences of bison and fire, and on much of the Niobrara preserve, cattle are used to supplement a small herd of bison. Other parts of the preserve are leased for growing hay, and on this day Kuhre discovers cattle from a neighboring pasture trespassing on a hay meadow. He rounds up the straying yearling heifers from horseback and returns them to their own pasture.

**10:30 a.m. Elk Mountain, New Mexico.** The Conservancy's Bill Dunmire discovers and maps a new population of the rare alpine plant *Erigeron*

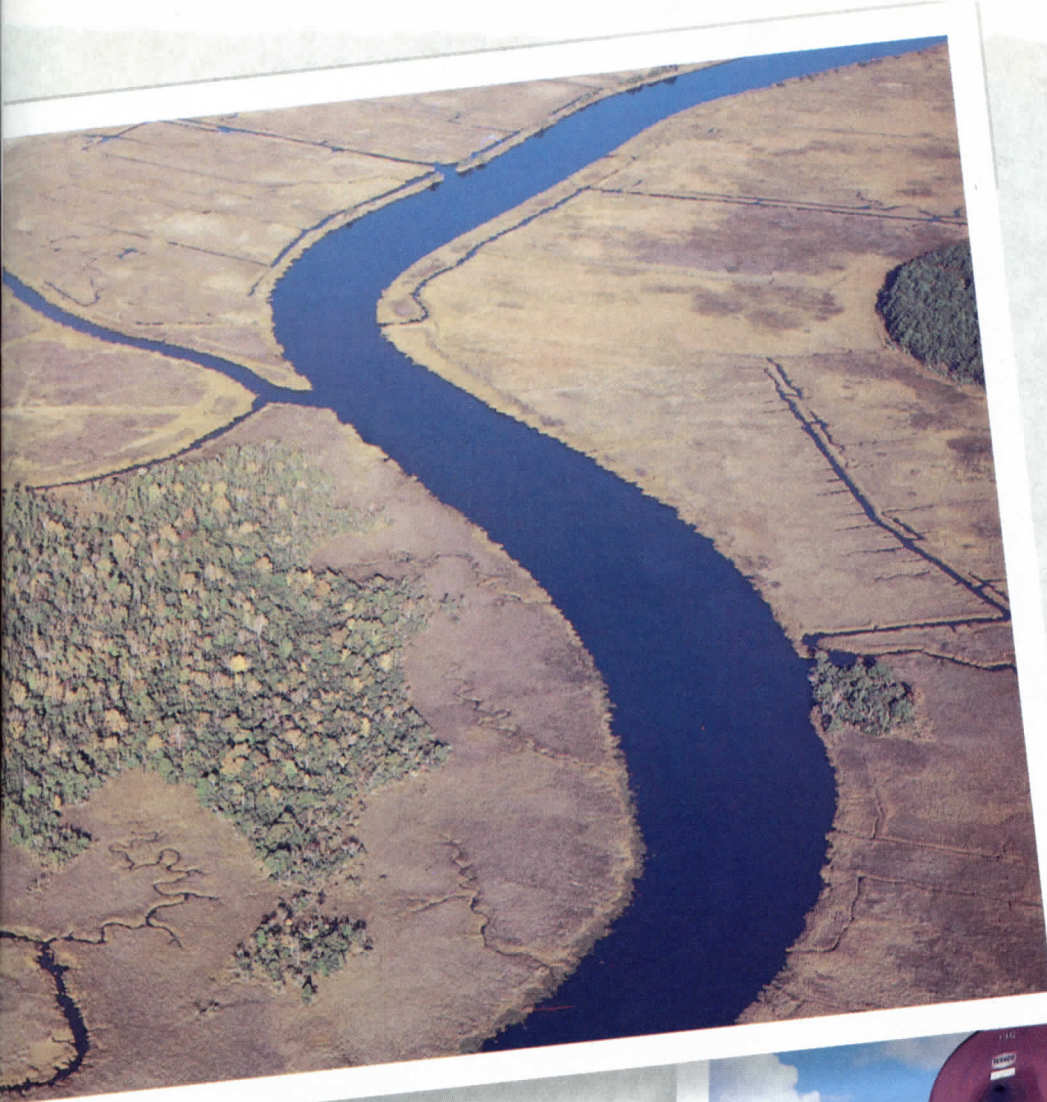


© WILLIAM NORRIS



© JEFF LEPORE





Top: Part of the Ashepoo, Combahee and Edisto rivers (ACE) basin in South Carolina. Below left: Riding herd at Nebraska's Niobrara Valley Preserve. Below right: Cleaning up High Creek Fen in Colorado.

*subglaber*. This tiny (two inches high) species of fleabane was previously known only from a single collection in 1915 in the vicinity of 11,600-foot-high Elk Mountain, now part of Santa Fe National Forest. Dunmire and a volunteer have undertaken the search for the plant as part of a cooperative effort between the Conservancy and the U.S. Forest Service.

**11:00 a.m. Tallahassee, Florida.** The Conservancy's George Willson meets with Florida's secretary of the department of environmental regulation, Carol Browner. They discuss the possibility of adding Pinhook Swamp, a large wetland near the Georgia border, to the state's list of land acquisition projects. The swamp is important because it acts as a natural corridor for wildlife and water between nearby Okefenokee



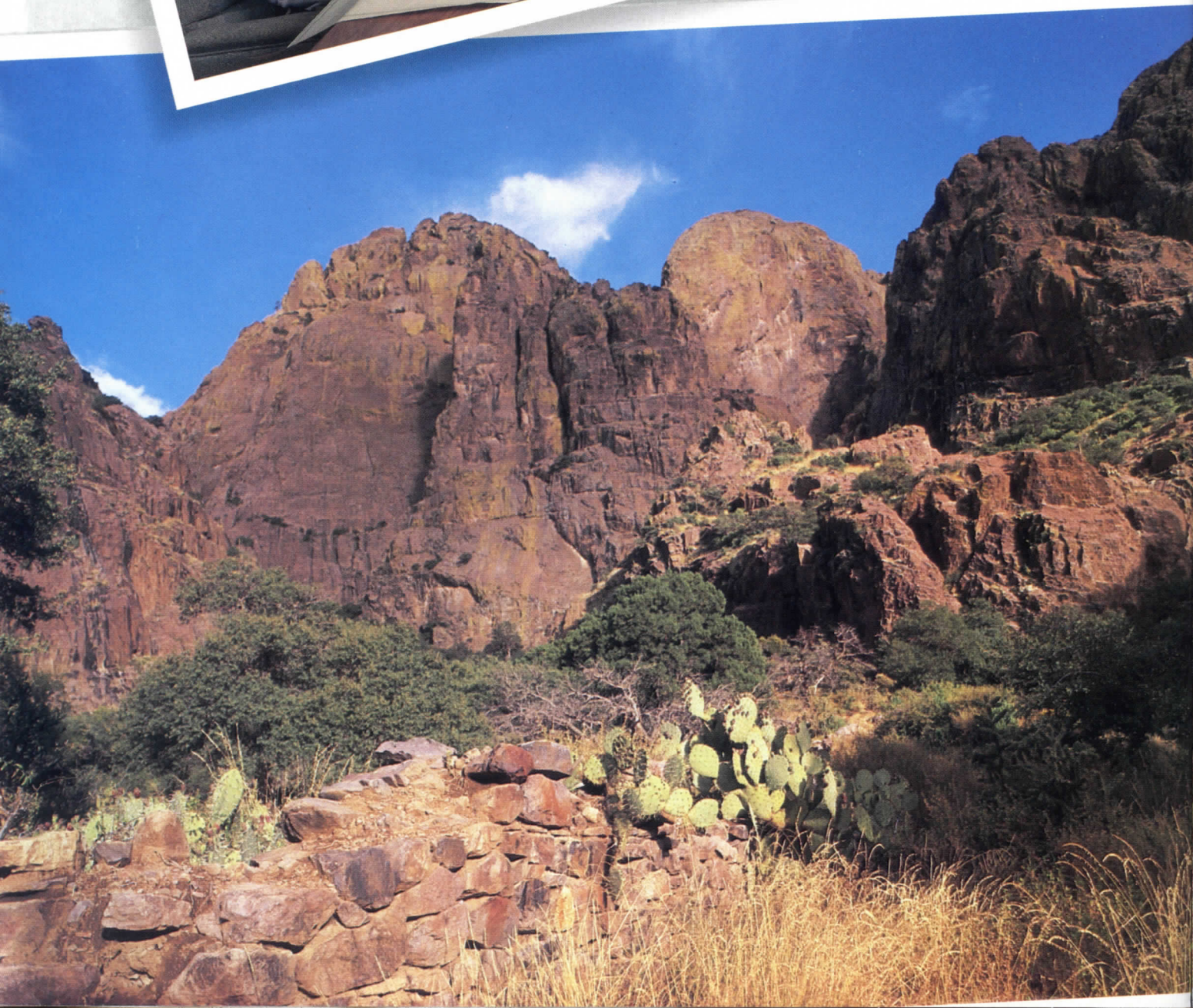
© RON FEDER/STAFF





© HUGH SCOGGINS

Top left: The Conservancy's George Willson meets with Florida state official Carol Browner. Top right: Carmie Henry (left) and Nancy DeLamar lunch at Cotham's General Store in Arkansas. Below: New Mexico's Dripping Springs Preserve.





National Wildlife Refuge and Osceola National Forest.

**11:45 a.m. Las Cruces, New Mexico.** At The Nature Conservancy's Dripping Springs Preserve, cows from neighboring rangeland are spotted grazing in a sensitive area. Preserve naturalist Katie Skaggs' husband, Roger, and their boys round up the cows but are unable to get them out because visitors are wandering up the trail.

**Noon. Atlanta, Georgia.**

Christi Lambert of the Georgia office talks about her research on the Altamaha River at lunch with representatives of Georgia Power. Lambert is conducting an inventory of the rare plants, animals and natural communities of the slow-moving, 137-mile-long river, which provides habitat for a number of unusual species, including five types of endemic clams. The Georgia Power representatives update Lambert on their research on fish and invertebrates in the river, and offer the assistance of their biologists for Lambert's project.

**12:30 p.m. Scott, Arkansas.** The Conservancy's Nancy DeLamar lunches at Cotham's General Store with Carmie Henry, the administrative aide of U.S. Senator David Pryor (D-Ark.). They discuss a federal appropriation for acquiring additional acreage (with the Conservancy acting as intermediary) at Cache River National Wildlife Refuge. "The refuge is really a treasure for the people of Arkansas," says DeLamar. "It's part of the largest remaining contiguous forest on the whole Mississippi River delta." The refuge's wetlands are also important to waterfowl, shorebirds and songbirds that migrate up and down the Mississippi flyway.

**1:45 p.m. Birmingham, Alabama.** A reporter from a local television station calls Beth Hamric at the Conservancy's Alabama office about a special he is doing on the state's endangered species. He is looking for photos and film footage of Alabama's rare plants and animals. Because of the limited amount of material available, "it's the hardest special I have ever put together," the reporter says. Hamric offers to supply the reporter with material from her small library, and refers him to other possible sources.

**2:30 p.m. Boston, Massachusetts.** At the Conservancy's eastern regional office, Joy Gaddy meets with a representative from BASEC, a job placement agency for minorities. The office

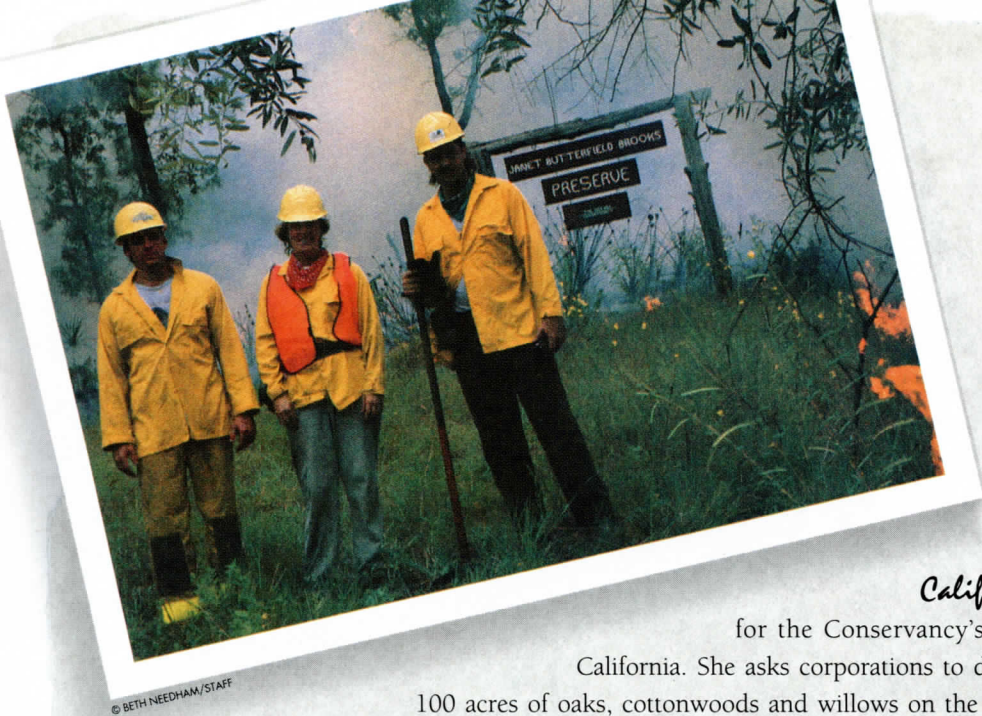


© GEORGE CHAMBERS



© NEW MEXICO FIELD OFFICE





© BETH NEEDHAM/STAFF

has contracted with BASEC as part of an effort to improve its affirmative action program. Gaddy and the BASEC official review the resumes of minority job applicants, with an eye toward placing them in Conservancy offices throughout the eastern region.

*3 p.m. San Francisco, California.* Kathleen Bean solicits contributions

for the Conservancy's 40th anniversary tree-planting effort in

California. She asks corporations to donate money and employees to help plant

100 acres of oaks, cottonwoods and willows on the Cosumnes River Preserve on November 9.

"So far the response has been overwhelming," Bean says. "I find that the corporate world is eager to participate in environmental causes."

*4:10 p.m. East Lansing, Michigan.* A Conservancy member from the Keweenaw Peninsula calls to say that the county's zoning laws are under fire. Keweenaw, which juts into Lake Superior from Michigan's Upper Peninsula, is the home of the Conservancy's Horseshoe Harbor Preserve. This 600-acre preserve contains rare bedrock beach and fine stands of boreal (northern) forest that shelter wood warblers, black bears, red squirrels and falcons. Government officials are considering new zoning regulations for the area that would, among other things, allow timber cutting on lands adjacent to the preserve. The Conservancy's Tom Woiwode discusses the situation with his staff and decides to go to the county planning commission's next meeting to speak on behalf of protecting fragile ecosystems.

*Brookville, Florida.* Six Conservancy staff and three volunteers burn 90 acres of turkey oak and longleaf pine/wiregrass communities at the Janet Butterfield Brooks Preserve. Fires are an important part of the natural cycle for several rare Florida ecosystems.

*4:30 p.m. Las Cruces, New Mexico.* At Dripping Springs Preserve, two Conservancy volunteers and an employee of the federal Bureau of Land Management finally succeed in driving the trespassing cows out of the restricted area by waving their arms and shouting.

*5 p.m. Seattle, Washington.* Kristin Mishler runs her weekly evening session for volunteers at the Conservancy's Washington office. These sessions, for people who can't come in during the day, have been very popular since Mishler started them earlier in the summer. On this night, five volunteers work on a bulk mailing, entering data on the computer, and other office projects.

*8 p.m. Des Moines, Iowa.* Wayne Ostlie distributes information about the Conservancy to people stopping by the organization's booth at the annual Iowa State Fair. Ostlie and more than 70 other staff and volunteers passed out brochures and answered questions at the Conservancy booth during the 10-day state fair, which drew more



than 800,000 people. "It's a real treat to see the enthusiasm for conservation in Iowa expressed by the thousands of people who visited the booth," he says.

*Peru.* Dan Quinn from the Conservancy's Latin America program spends the day traveling by boat on the Pacaya River, a tributary of the Amazon. He is there to design a \$3.6-million project to improve the protection and management of the 5-million acre Pacaya-Samiria National Reserve, one of the Conservancy's "Parks in Peril." Pacaya-Samiria is considered one of the top wetlands in the world because of its sheer size and diversity. It contains lowland tropical rain forests and swamp forests, as well as lakes, rivers and streams. Quinn encounters a variety of wildlife, including herons, egrets and cormorants, as well as freshwater dolphins that "porpoise" (jump into the air) near the boat.

*9 p.m. Tusas Mountains, New Mexico.* Chel Anderson settles into her sleeping bag "for the kind of snooze that can only be had at 10,000 feet," after a day of exploring the Brazos Box Canyon. The canyon is formed by the Brazos River—a swift, clear, cold mountain stream flowing under 1,500-foot-high granite cliffs. The canyon—only 100 yards wide at the bottom in some places—is rich in fauna and flora, particularly species usually found further north in the Rockies. The Conservancy's New Mexico office and the state government are considering jointly purchasing this area to protect it.

*Tally for the day: 11,864.8 acres of land protected in nine separate transactions in Georgia, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire and Washington. #*



© DAN QUINN/STAFF

Top left: A controlled burn at a preserve in Brooksville, Florida. Above: Youngsters play in Peru's Pacaya River at sunset.